



NEWS RELEASE

IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

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www.idwr.idaho.gov

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Water Board to Receive Public Comment on Draft Eastern Snake Plain Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan

The Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) will receive comment on the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) draft Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) via mail, e-mail, and during a series of public meetings next month in Pocatello, Twin Falls and Idaho Falls. A copy of the draft plan and associated documents is available on the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) web site at www.idwr.idaho.gov or the ESPA CAMP web site at <http://www.esaplan.idaho.gov/>

An ESPA Advisory Committee of stakeholder representatives was appointed in 2007 by the Board and Governor Otter. The committee was comprised of representatives from irrigation companies, ground water users, spring water users, hydropower, land developers, environmental/conservation interests, well owners, county assessors and mayors of cities within the ESPA.

Over the last 18 months, the committee has held monthly meetings in various locations in the area of the ESPA. The result of those meetings is the draft Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) for the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) which was accepted for public review by the Board on Thursday. After considering public comment and reviewing the plan, the board will consider adopting a final plan for submission to the 2009 Idaho Legislature.

“Public comments should be made as soon as possible so they can be fully considered by the Board since we are on a tight time schedule and we have a number of ways that interested parties can do that,” said Hal Anderson, IDWR lead staff member for the Board.

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Water Board to Receive Public Comment – Page 2

Written comment can be sent via mail to: Idaho Department of Water Resources
Attn: Sandra Thiel
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0098

Written comment in electronic form can be e-mailed to: IDWRInfo@idwr.idaho.gov

Comment on the draft plan may also be made in person at the following public meetings:

Day & Date	Time	City	Place
Tues. 12/2/2008	7:00 p.m.	Pocatello	Pocatello City Council Chambers 911 N 7th Ave
Thurs. 12/4/2008	7:00 p.m.	Twin Falls	Twin Falls City Council Chambers 321 2nd Avenue East
Wed. 12/10/2008	7:00 p.m.	Idaho Falls	Idaho Falls City Council Chambers 308 Constitution Way

The public meetings will consist of an introduction by an IWRB representative, a presentation on the Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan process, including the ESPA advisory committee's draft plan recommendations followed by questions or comments from the public.

In light of declining aquifer levels, reduced spring and river flows and a number of lawsuits, the draft plan is an effort to adjust water supply and demand in the ESPA over the long term, and to identify opportunities to manage the available water to meet current and future water needs.

The Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) provides drinking water for about one-third of Idaho's population that resides on the Eastern Snake Plain. Agriculture is the largest consumptive user of ESPA water with roughly 2.1 million irrigated acres on the ESPA (about 60% of Idaho's total). About one-half of the irrigation water applied is ground water and one half is surface water.

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